OUR SERIAL.

ADORATION.

Don't you know, dear, I adore you
Just as I used to do;
Blue skies and rainbows o'er you,
Blossoms begemmed with dew,
Shaded cool paths before you,
Shrubs where the birds sing, too.
Don't you know, dear, I adore you
Just as I used to do?

In the dear days gone by, dear,
In the dear days of June,
Didn't our hopes soar high, dear?
Didn't the love birds croon?
Well, do you know, my own dear,
Still I can catch their tune?
Sitting here all alone, dear,
Still does my life seem June.

Sitting here all alone, dear,
Thinking of then and you;
Days that we both have known, dear,
Branches a-drip with dew,
Branches a-drip with dew, dear,
Boughs where the love birds croon,
Life all the years with you, dear,
Seems a long honeymoon.

Still as my locks grow whiter,
Still is my thought of you;
Days but make hearts grow lighter,
Hearts that are leal and true;
Still have we nearer grown, dear,
Still do I walk with you,
Never, ah, never alone, dear,
Out 'neath the blooms and dew.
—J. M. Lewis, in Houston Post.

A Daughter of the Sioux

By GEN. CHARLES KING.

CHAPTER XXII.

In the whirl and excitement following the startling outcry from the flats, all Fort Frayne was speedily involved. The guard came rushing through the night, Corporal Shannon stumbling over a prostrate form—the sentry on Number Six, gagged and bound. The steward shouted from the hospital porch that Eagle Wing, the prisoner patient, had escaped through the rear window, despite its height above the sloping ground. A little ladder, borrowed from the quartermaster's corral, was found a moment later. An Indian pony, saddled Sioux fashion, was caught running, riderless, toward the trader's back gate his horsehair bridle torn half way from his shaggy head. Sergeant Crabb, waiting for no orders from the major, no sooner heard that Moreau was gone than he rushed his stable guard to the saddleroom, and in 15 minutes had, not only his own squad, but half a dozen "casual" troopers circling the post in search of the trail, and in less than half an hour was hot in chase of two fleeing horsemen, dimly seen ahead through the starlight, across the snowy wastes. That snowfall was the Sioux's undoing. Without it the trail would have been invisible at night. With it, the pursued were well-nigh hopeless from the start. Precious time had been lost in circling far out south of the post before making for the ford whither Crabb's instinct sent him at once to the end that he and two of his fellows ploughed through the foaming waters barely 500 yards behind the chase and as they rode vehemently onward through the starlight, straining every nerve, they heard nothing of the happenings about the Foster's doorway, where by this time post commander, post surgeon, post quartermaster and acting post adjutant, post ordnance, quartermaster and commissary sergeants, many of the post guard and most of the post laundresses had gathered—some silent, anxious and bewildered, some excitedly babbling; while, within the sergeant's domicile, Esther Dade, very pale and somewhat out of breath, was trying with quiet self possession to answer the myriad questions poured at her, while Dr. Waller was ministering to the dazed and moaning sentry, and, in an adjoining tenement, a little group had gathered about an unconscious form. Some one had sent for Mrs. Hay, who was silently, tearfully chafing the limp and almost lifeless hands of a girl in Indian garb. The cloak and skirts of civilization had been found beneath the window of the deserted room, and were exhibited as a means of bringing to his senses a much bewildered major, whose first words on entering the hut gave rise to wonderment in the eyes of most of his hearers, and to an impulsive reply from the lips of Mrs. Hay.

"I warned the general that girl would play us some Indian trick, but he ordered her release," said Flint, and with wrathful emphasis came the answer.

"The general warned you this girl would play you a trick, and, thanks to no one but you, she's done it!"

Then rising and stepping aside, the long-suffering woman revealed the palid, senseless face—not of the little Indian maid, her shrinking charge and guest—but of the niece she loved and had lived and lied for many and trying years—Nanette La Fleur, a long-lost sister's only child. So Blake knew what he was talking about that keen November morning among the pines at Bear Cliff. He had unearthed an almost forgotten legend of old Fort Laramie.

"Who could have done it?" asked Flint. It was inconceivable to Dr. Waller's mind that any one of the soldiery could have been tempted to such perfidy for an Indian's sake. There was not at the moment an Indian scout or soldier at the post, or an Indian warrior, not a prisoner, unaccounted for. There had been half-breeds hanging about the store prior to the final escapade of Pete and Crapaud, but these had realized their unpopularity after the battle on the Elk, and had departed for other climes. Crapaud was still under guard. Pete was still at large, perchance, with Stabber's braves. There was not another man about the trader's place whom Flint or others could suspect. Yet the sergeant of the guard, searching cautiously with his lantern about the post of Number Six, had come upon some suggestive signs. The snow was trampled and bloody about the place where the soldier fell, and there were here and there the tracks of moccasined feet—those of a young woman or child going at speed toward the hospital, running probably, and followed close by a moccasined man. Then those of the man, alone, went sprinting down the bluff southeastward over the flats some distance south of the Foster's doorway and up the opposite bluff, to a point where four ponies, shoeless, had been huddled for as much, perhaps, as half an hour. Then all four had come scampering down close together into the space below the hospital, not 50 yards from where the sentry fell, and the moccasined feet of a man and woman had scurried down the bluff from the hospital window, to meet them west of Foster's shanty. Then there had been confusion—trouble of some kind: One pony, pursued a short distance, had broken away; the others had gone pounding out southeastward up the slope and out over the uplands, then down again; in wide sweep, through the valley of the Little rivulet and along the low bench southwest of the fort, crossing the Rock Springs road and striking, further on, diagonally, the Rawlins trail, where Crabb and his fellows had found it and followed.

But all this took hours of time, and meanwhile, only half revived, Nanette had been gently, pityingly borne away to a sorrowing woman's home, for at last it was found, through the thick and lustrous hair, that she, too, had been struck a harsh and cruel blow; that one reason, probably, why she had been able to oppose no stouter resistance to so slender a girl as Esther Dade was that she was already half dazed through the stroke of some blunt, heavy weapon, wielded probably by him she was risking all to save.

Meantime the major had been pursuing his investigations. Schmidt, the soldier sentry in front of Moreau's door, a simple-hearted Teuton of irreproachable character, tearfuly protested against his incarceration. He had obeyed his orders to the letter. The major himself had brought the lady to the hospital and showed her in. The door that had been open, permitting the sentry constant sight of the prisoner, had been closed by the commanding officer himself. Therefore, it was not for him, a private soldier, to presume to reopen it. The major said to the lady he would return for her soon after ten, and the lady smilingly (Schmidt did not say how smilingly—how bewitchingly smilingly, but the major needed no reminder) thanked him, and said, by that time she would be ready. In a few minutes she came out, saying (doubtless with the same bewitching smile) she would have to run over home for something, and she was gone nearly half an hour, and all that time the door was open, the prisoner on the bed in his blankets, the lamp brightly burning. It was near tattoo when she returned, with some things under her cloak, and she was breathing quick and seemed hurried and shut the door after thanking him, and he saw no more of her for 15 minutes, when the door opened and out she came, the same cloak around her, yet she looked different, somehow, and must have tiptoed, for he didn't hear her heels as he had before. She didn't seem quite so tall, either, and that was all, for he never knew anything more about it till the steward came running to tell of the escape.

So Schmidt could throw but little light upon the situation, save to Flint himself, who did not then see fit to say to anyone that at no time was it covenanted that Miss Flower should be allowed to go and come unattended. In doing so she had deluded some one beside the sentry.

It was late in the night when Number Six regained his senses and could tell his tale, which was even more damaging. Quite early in the evening, so he said—as early as nine o'clock—he was under the hospital corner, listening to the music further up along the bluff. A lady came from the south of the building as though she were going down to Sudstown. Mrs. Foster had gone down not long before, and Hogan, with a lantern, and two officers' ladies. But this one came all alone and spoke to him pleasant-like and said she was so sorry he couldn't be at the dance. She'd been seeing the sick and wounded in hospital, she said, and was going to bring some wine and jellies. If he didn't mind, she'd take the path around the quartermaster's storehouse outside, as she was going to Mr. Hay's, and didn't care to go through by the guardhouse. So Six let her go, as he "had no orders agin it" (even though it dawned upon him that this must be the young lady that had been carried off by the Sioux). That made him think a bit, he said, and when she came back with a basket nicely covered with a white napkin, she made him take a big chicken sandwich "Sure I didn't know how to refuse the lady, until she poured me out a big tumbler of wine—wine, she said, she was taking in to Sergt. Briggs and Corporal Turner that was shot at the Elk, and she couldn't bear to see me all alone out there in the cold." But Six said he dasn't take the wine. He got six months "blind" once for a similar solecism, and, mindful of the major's warning (this was diplomatic), Six swore he had sworn off, and had to refuse the repeated requests of the lady. He suspicioned her, he said, because she was so persistent. Then she laughed and said good-night and went on to the hospital. What became of the wine she had poured out? (This from the grim and hitherto silent doctor, seated by the bedside.) She must have tossed it out or drunk it herself, perhaps, Six didn't know. Certainly no trace of it could be found in the snow. Then nothing happened for as much as 20 minutes or so, and he was over toward the south end of his post, but facing toward the hospital when she came again down the steps, and this time handed him some cake and told him he was a good soldier not to drink even wine, and asked him what were the lights away across the Platte, and he couldn't see any, and was following her pointing finger and staring, and then all of a sudden he saw a million lights dancing and stars and bombs and that was all he knew till they began talking to him here in hospital. Something had hit him from behind, but he couldn't tell what.

Flint's nerve was failing him, for here was confirmation of the general's theory.

And so it was with hardened and resentful heart that the major sought her on the morrow. The general and the commands afield would soon be coming home. Such Indians as they had not "rounded up" and captured were scattered far and wide. The campaign was over. Now for the disposition of the prisoners. It was to tell Mrs. Hay and Nanette, especially Nanette, why the sentries were re-established about their home that, though he would not place the trader's niece within a garrison cell, he should hold her prisoner beneath the trader's roof to await the action of superior authority on the grievous charges lodged at her door. She was able to be up, said Miss McGrath—not only up, but down—down in the breakfast room, looking blither and more like herself than she had been since she was brought home.

"Say that Maj. Flint desires to see her and Mrs. Hay," said Flint, with majesty of mien, as, followed by two of his officers, he was shown into the trader's parlor.

And presently they came—Mrs. Hay pale and sorrowing; Miss Flower, pale, perhaps, but triumphantly defiant. The one sat and covered her face with her hands as she listened to the major's few words, cold, stern and accusing. The other looked squarely at him, with fearless, glittering eyes:

"You may order what you like so far as I'm concerned," was the utterly reckless answer of the girl. "I don't care what you do now that I know he is safe—free—and that you will never lay hands on him again."

"That's where you are in error, Miss Flower," was the major's calm, cold-blooded, yet rejoiceful reply. It was for this, indeed, that he had come. "Ralph Moreau was run down by my men soon after midnight, and he's now behind the bars."

CHAPTER XXIII.

December and bitter cold. The river frozen stiff. The prairie sheeted in unbroken snow. Great log fires roaring in every open fireplace. Great throngs of soldiery about the red hot barrack stoves, for all the columns were again in winter quarters, and Flint's two companies had "got the route" for home. They

"IT'S A LIE! YOU SHALL NOT SAY IT, SIR!" CRIED FIELD.

were to march on the morrow, escorting as far as Laramie the intractables of Stabber's band, some few of the Indians to go in irons, among them Ralph Moreau, or Eagle Wing, now a notorious character.

The general was there at Frayne, with old Black Bill, erstwhile chief inspector of the department, once a subaltern in days long gone by when Laramie was "Ultima Thule" of the plains forts. The general had heard Flint's halting explanation of his laxity in Moreau's case, saying almost as little as his old friend Grant when "interviewed" by those of whom he disapproved. "Black Bill" it was who waxed explosive when once he opened on the major, and showed that amazed New Englander something of the contents of Moreau's Indian kit, including the now famous hunting pouch, all found with Stabber's village. A precious scoundrel, as it turned out, was this same Moreau, with more sins to answer for than many a convicted jail bird, and with not one follower left to do him reverence except, perhaps, that lonely girl, self secluded at the Hays.' Hay himself, though weak, was beginning to sit up. Dade, Blake and Ray were all once more housed in garrison. Truscott and Billings, with their hardy troopers, had taken temporary station at the post, until the general had decided upon the disposition of the array of surrendered indians, nearly 300 in number, now confined under strong guard in the quartermaster's corral at the flats, with six "head devils," including Eagle Wing, in the garrison prison.

All the officers, with two exceptions, were again for duty at Frayne. Webb, laid by the heels at Beecher, his feet severely frozen, and Beverly Field, who, recalled from a brief and solemn visit to a far southern home, had reached the post at nightfall of the tenth. There had hardly been allowed him time to uplift a single prayer, to receive a word of consolation from the lips of friends and kindred who loved the honored father, borne to his last resting place. "Come as soon as possible" read the message wired him by Ray, and, though the campaign was over, it was evident that something was amiss, and, with all his sorrow fresh upon him, the lad, sore in body and soul, had hastened to obey.

And it was Ray who received and welcomed him and took him straight way to his own cosy quarters, that Mrs. Ray, and then the Blakes, might add their sympathetic and cordial greeting—ere it came to telling why it was that these, his friends despite that trouble that could not be talked of, were now so earnest in their sympathy—before telling him that his good name had become involved, that there were allegations concerning him which the chief had ordered "pigeon-holed" until he should come to face them. A pity it was that Bill Hay could not have been there, too, but his fever had left him far too weak to leave his room. Only Ray and Blake were present and it was an interview not soon, if ever, to be forgotten.

"I'm no hand at breaking things gently, Field," said Ray, when finally the three were closeted together in the captain's den. "It used to worry Webb that you were seen so often riding with Miss—Miss Flower up to Stabber's village, and, in the light of what has since happened, you will admit that he had reasons. Hear me through," he continued, as Field, sitting bolt upright in the easy chair, essayed to speak. "Neither Capt. Blake nor I believe one word to your dishonor in the matter, but it looks as though you had been made a tool of, and you are by no means the first man. It was to see this fellow, Moreau—Eagle Wing—whom you recognized at the Elk—she was there so frequently—was it not?"

Into Field's pale face there had come a look of infinite distress. For a moment he hesitated, and little beads began to start out on his forehead.

"Capt. Ray," he finally said, "they tell me—I heard it from the driver on the way up from Rock Springs—that Miss Flower is virtually a prisoner, that she had been in league with the Sioux, and yet, until I can see her—can secure my release from a promise, I have to answer you as I answered you before—I cannot say."

Blake started impatiently and heaved up from his lounging chair, his long legs taking him in three strides to the frost-covered window at the front. Ray sadly shook his dark, curly head.

"You are to see her, Field. The general—bless him for a trump!—wouldn't listen to a word against you in your absence; but that girl has involved everybody—you, her aunt, who has been devotion itself to her, her uncle, who was almost her slave. She deliberately betrayed him into the hands of the Sioux. In fact this red robber and villain, Moreau, is the only creature she hasn't tried to 'work,' and he abandoned her after she had lied, sneaked and stolen for him."

"Capt. Ray!" The cry came from pallid lips, and the young soldier started to his feet, appalled at such accusation.

"Every word of it is true," said Ray. "She joined him after his wounds. She shared his escape from the village at our approach. She was with him when Blake nabbed them at Bear Cliff. She was going with him from here. What manner of girl was that, Field, for you to be mixed up with?"

"He is her half brother!" protested Field, with kindling eyes. "She told me—everything—told me of their childhood together, and—"

"Told you a pack of infernal lies!" burst in Blake, no longer able to contain himself. "Made you a cat's paw; led you even to taking her by night to see him when she learned the band were to jump for the mountains—used you, by God, as he used her, and, like the Indian she is, she'd turn and stab you now, if you stood in her way or his. Why, Field, that brute's her lover, and she's his—"

"It's a lie! You shall not say it, sir!" cried Field, beside himself with wrath and amaze, as he stood quivering from head to foot, still weak from wounds, fever and distress of mind. But Ray sprang to his side. "Hush, Blake! Hush, Field! Don't speak. What is it, Hogan?" And sharply he turned him to the door, never dreaming what had caused the interruption.

"The general, sir, to see the captain!"

[To Be Continued.]

His Reason.

The Lady—But why don't you go over to Canada? They need a lot of farm hands over there.

Sandy Pikes—Well, I'll tell yer, mum. I would go but I hate de annoyance of de custom officers lookin' froo me baggage fer smuggled diamonds.—Chicago Daily News.